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GORDON

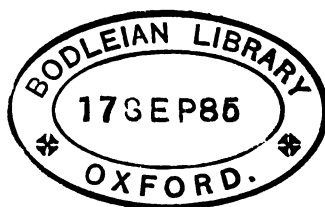
JUDGED OUT OF HIS OWN MOUTH.

BY
ANNIE BESANT.



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GORDON JUDGED OUT OF HIS OWN MOUTH.

"SAVE me from my friends!" has been a proverbial saying, and never had man more reason to cry for such salvation than the man whom unwise friends have exalted into a modern martyr and saint—the late General Gordon. A straightforward, brave, soldier of fortune; a sharp man of business, with an "eye to the main chance"; by no means heroic, and making no pretence to heroism; laughing rather at the humbug of friends at home who desired to gild his work with some thin coating of philanthropy, and describing it honestly as hateful work that he was sick of, cruel and unjust to the highest degree. A man worthy neither of very high praise nor of very severe blame; trying to do his duty to the tyrant who hired him, while often disgusted with the acts entailed by that duty; fearless, hot-tempered, variable, inconsistent, often violent and unjust, but on the whole endeavoring to do the best he could under conditions which rendered right action impossible; possessed of arbitrary authority and often exercising it recklessly, but on the whole not misusing it as much as many might have done; fanatical in his religion, but tolerant of the various forms of religious belief around him, and tempering his own fanaticism with a shrewd common-sense when it interfered with his work; genial at times, with a vein of humor in him, sometimes grim, sometimes mocking; a canny Scotch Covenanter, with a sturdy faith in God and a strenuous belief that his own will was identical with the divine—such was General Gordon, as drawn, not by the pencil of his admirers, but by himself in his own letters home, sketched unconsciously in his narration of his doings in letters not intended for publication, and given to the world under the title of "General Gordon in Central Africa, 1874—1879." On the whole, a far more likable and sensible human being than the impossible hybrid of heroism, saintliness, St. Michael-and-the-dragonism, and pietism that has been held up for the homage—or the derision—of the world.

The editor of these letters, Dr. G. Birkbeck Hill, speaks of General Gordon in the fashionable hyperbolic style: "Rarely . . . has so great a hero told his own story in

words so great. Where could the like of Gordon be found—where in the pages of history or romance? In Spenser's 'Faerie Queen', in 'Cromwell's Letters', in 'George Fox's Journal', in 'Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress', in 'Robinson Crusoe', in the story of the Israelites, in the Gospel story, he may be seen; but in his letters alone are gathered together the parts that have gone to the making up of this one glorious man. . . . Who can be said to put us in mind of Gordon? Who that is alive now? Who that has ever lived?" Dr. Butler, the Dean of Gloucester, preaching in the Chapel Royal, St. James's, used similar words of high-flown eulogy:

"It is no exaggeration to say that the great and good man who has just been snatched away speaks like a prophet of Christ to the men of this generation. The last week has been a week of Mission in this vast diocese. And then, just as these special services began, and the prayers of thousands were rising to God that he would lift them out of their worldliness, and teach them the lessons of the manger and the cross, suddenly there flashed across deserts and seas the tidings of the lonely martyrdom of one who stood out before the world as the very symbol of unworldliness and self-sacrifice; a man who cared absolutely nothing for wealth, or honor, or comforts of any kind; who lived for others, prayed for others, and was at any moment ready to die for them;

Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,
And Fear and Bloodshed, miserable train,
Turned his necessity to glorious gain;

a man who was never so much in his element as when ministering, at home or abroad, to misery and want; whose conception of life was drawn straight from the Bible, and that faithful mirror of one aspect of the Bible, the famous 'Imitation of Christ'; a man who had for years trodden with unflinching feet what that high-toned book describes as 'the King's high-way of the Holy Cross', and had accepted and, as it were, drunk in with every fibre of his being, that most sublime of Christian truisms—'Go where thou wilt, seek whatsoever thou wilt, thou shalt not find a higher way above, nor a safer way below, than the way of the holy cross'. During the solemn week that has just closed, while every preacher and missionary in London was seeking to impress once more this ideal first on himself and then on those to whom he ministered, was it nothing to know that the most conspicuously Christ-like man of his day had just crowned a Christ-like life with a Christ-like death? Was there any appeal at such a time to compare with his example? Was there any voice so eloquent as the hashed voice of the dead?

Therefore in an age of boundless self-indulgence, when com-

fort in every form, and avoidance of effort, physical and intellectual, spread their snares so wide and so fatally, let us give thanks for this illustrious spectacle of heroic and saintly self-sacrifice.

Let his great example stand,
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure."

Curious indeed is it to read such words and then to read his own view of his work: "Some philanthropic people write to me about 'noble work', 'poor blacks', etc. I have, I think, stopped their writing by acknowledging ourselves to be a pillaging horde of brigands, and proposing to them to leave their comfortable homes, and come out to their favorite 'poor blacks'! or to give up their wine and devote the proceeds to sending out *real* missions. . . . 'We do not want your beads; we do not want your cloth;' of the poor Moogies rings in my ears. 'We want you to go away.' They know well enough the little benefits that would ever accrue from our occupation" (p. 143). (All the quotations are from the fourth edition of the book named above.) Again: "We derided the poor blacks who fought for their independence, and now God gave them the victory, and I declare, in spite of the expressions you may note in my letters, I truly sympathise with them. They say, 'We do not want your cloth and your beads; you go your way and we will go ours; we do not want to see your chief.' This they have said over and over again, but we cannot leave them on our flank, and it is indispensable that they shall be subjected. They have said, 'This land is ours, and you shall not have it, neither its bread nor its flocks.' Poor fellows! . . . Just this moment I see four sheep upon our long island where I was to-day. I expect the poor inhabitants want peace, and (D. V.) I will go and reassure them to-morrow. It is such a fine island, about three miles long, and with such fine trees. A station there would command all the country" (pp. 114, 115). "I can quite enter into these poor people's misery at their impotency. 'We do not want beads; we do not want to see the Pasha;' (I am sure I do not want to see them!) 'we want our own lands, and you to go away.' Their poor minds never conceived such a trial as this before. Rain was their only care before, now *civilisation* (?) is to begin with them; they are to be brought into the family of nations" (p. 120). "How cordially glad I shall be when the whole relations between us cease! I cannot

help it, but I have taken such a dislike to these blacks that I cannot bear their sight. I do not mean the natives, but these soldiers. They are nothing but a set of pillagers, and are about as likely to civilise these parts as they are to civilise the moon" (p. 139). So far was he from feeling any philanthropic yearnings towards the people he was conquering and ruling that he wrote: "Cowardly, lying, effeminate brutes these Arabs and Soudanese! without any good point about them that I can see. It is degrading to call these leaders and these men officers and soldiers—I wish they had one neck and someone would squeeze it! When not obliged, I keep as far as I can from them, out of earshot of their voices" (p. 77). "As for the Arabs, with one exception, they are lazy, effeminate, shirking, and only seeking a hole to hide in. As for the Soudanese, they are idle, only thinking of their own comfort, and shirking" (p. 127). "I cannot say I shall ever take a great interest in the black tribes. They are to me all alike; whether one has a bunch of leaves or a scrap of calico does not make much difference to my mind; they are all black, they shave their heads, and they look all alike, male and female" (p. 47). Rather a contrast, this expression by Gordon of his own view about his work, to that of Dr. Butler! The preacher sees him "ministering" "to misery and want"; he sees himself as the chief of "a set of pillagers", rendering miserable savages who were happy before he invaded their land. His own account of these tribes was: "They would seem to get on well without any regular laws, and to live out their span in comparative quiet. . . . No country presents such a field to a philosopher as this country does, with its dense population quite innocent of the least civilisation. I should say that they are singularly free from vice; their wars are generally very harmless affairs, and seldom cause bloodshed" (pp. 99, 100). "The people are quite quiet and inoffensive, and a man of some intellect would soon gain an immense influence over them" (p. 82). If Gordon took such a view of his work, it may fairly be asked, why did he do it? His reasons were simple enough, but certainly not heroic. He bargained for £2,000 a year pay, and says at the outset: "I took the opportunity of asking him [Shereef Pasha] to express to the Khedive my ideas of giving up the affair if it did not pay" (p. 1). He states that if he be dismissed he will not care much, as the

work is hard and the gain not large: "At the end of two years, say £2,000; at the end of three, say £3,500 at the outside" (p. 93). Then again he liked the freedom of the wild life: "I felt too independent to serve, with my views, at Malta or in the corps, and perhaps I felt I had in me something that, if God willed, might benefit these lands, for he has given me great energy and health and some little common sense" (p. 59). "I am quite independent of the Khedive for money, and have heaps of stores of all sorts, ammunition, etc. In fact, I am semi-independent. In a year he has had £48,000 from the province, and I have spent say £20,000 at the outside, and have £60,000 worth of ivory here" (p. 117). He thought that on the whole his own rule was better than that of an Egyptian pasha: "If they are to be put down, it is better I should do it than an exterminating pasha who would have no mercy" (p. 105). A saint and a hero ought scarcely to have embraced evil work because he would be less cruel in the doing it than would an unredeemed ruffian, but then Gordon did not pretend to be either the one or the other. He took a very common-sense view of the situation: "Remember that no one is ever obliged to enter the service of one of these States, and that if he does he has to blame himself and not the Oriental State. If the Oriental State is well-governed, then it is very sure he will never be wanted. The rottenness of the State is his *raison d'être*; and it is absurd for him to be surprised at things not being as they ought to be according to his ideas" (pp. 351, 352).

Passing from his opinion of his work and from the ludicrous misrepresentations of it by press and preachers, let us see what instructions he took from the Khedive, and what the nature of his work really was.

It seems from the "Abstract of the Khedive's final Instructions to Colonel Gordon" (pp. xxxi.—xxxiii.) that the province to which Gordon was sent had never really belonged to Egypt at all. Factories were established there by "lawless adventurers", who traded in slaves and ivory. The Egyptian Government "took the factories into their own hands, paying the owners an indemnification"; but some of the men were allowed to carry on trade "under a promise that they would not deal in slaves," and they were "placed under the control of the Governor of the Soudan". As this Governor had no means of controlling his new subjects, they went on in their own way; the

Khedive, according to his own account, "resolved to form them into a separate government, and to claim as a monopoly of the State the whole of the trade with the outside world"; he declared that he was moved to this by his desire to make clear "even in those remote parts, that a mere difference of color does not turn men into wares, and that life and liberty are sacred things". This admirable sentiment loses much of its force when we learn something of the real motives actuating the Khedive (Ismail Pasha). It seems that adventurers of various nationalities opened up the way towards the Equator, and that they fortified stations as they went, raiding for slaves and ivory. "About the year 1860 the scandal became so great that the Europeans had to get rid of their stations. They sold them to their Arab agents, who paid a rental for them to the Egyptian Government" (p. xxxvi.). Dr. Hill tells us that these Arabs were supplied with arms and ammunition by the Egyptian Government, and that the Khedive's sudden anxiety to put down the slave-hunters was caused "not by pity for the countless sufferers, but by the dread of the growth of a rival power". The slave-dealers "refused to the Government the rental that had been agreed on", and when the Khedive no longer shared the plunder he became alive to the fact that "life and liberty are sacred things". Colonel Gordon wrote "how anxious, how terribly anxious, the Khedive is to put down the slave-trade, which threatens his supremacy" (p. xl.), and Colonel Gordon's work was, as we shall see, not to put down slavery, but to destroy the power of the slave-hunters who were acquiring wealth in a country which the Khedive desired to annex to his own dominions. The action was a purely aggressive one on the part of Egypt, prompted by the desire to monopolise the lucrative Nile trade in ivory and cattle, and we shall see that Gordon served his employer well.

Colonel Gordon began his work as soon as he reached Khartoum: "I have issued a stinging decree, declaring the Government monopoly of the ivory trade, and prohibiting the import of arms and powder, the levying of armed bands by private people, and the entry of any one without passports—in fact I have put the district under martial law, *i.e.*, the will of the General" (p. 6). This "will" was somewhat imperious and unjust at times, by his own confession; "I am quite well, but my temper is

very, very short, and it is a bad time for those who come across me the wrong way" (p. 41). "I have worked them up well here the last two days, and hope the severe examples will brighten them up" (p. 84). He met a lad with a gang of slaves. "I asked the lad in charge of the gang to whom they belonged. As he hesitated, I gave him a cut across the face with my whip, which was cruel and cowardly; but I was enraged to see the poor women and children so utterly forlorn, and could not help it" (p. 288). One instance may serve as an example of his rough and ready "justice" (?), and may show the kind of work he did. There was a sheikh named Bedden, and "as he occupied a tract of land too near me to be comfortable, [!] and as he lately attacked a sheikh who had always been very friendly" (p. 69), Gordon after some hesitation resolved to make a raid on his cattle. The cattle at night are shut up in seribas (enclosures) with only one entrance, and if this entrance is seized the cattle are secured. Gordon started off with friendly natives, attracted by the prospect of plunder, and "we got the cows. We rewarded, with what was not our own, the 'friendlys', and came back . . . We got altogether 2,600 head" (p. 72). On the next day "we got 500 cows" (p. 73), and "I hope Bedden and Lococo will both submit before many days are over. I do most cordially hate this work; but the question is, what are you to do?" (p. 73). The sequel of the story is interesting; Gordon discovered "I had unwittingly carried off the cows of a friendly chief when I made my raid on Bedden" (p. 76), so he restored those, and a little later he met Bedden and found him to be a poor old man, partially blind (p. 78). He then "gave him twenty of the stolen cows, a coil of copper and a pair of scissors . . . These twenty cows are nothing to give for me, for we took 2,000, and I have everything to gain by such conduct" (p. 79). Not very heroic work, this, yet this was Gordon's work, done by him for years, although he continually protests that he dislikes it. "These are their maxims: if the natives do not act after the most civilised manner, then punish them for not so acting; but, if it comes to be a question of our action, then follow the customs of the natives, viz., recognise plunder as no offence whatever. Such is the reasoning of these creatures" (p. 80). But Gordon led "these creatures" and acted on their system.

Gordon raised his revenue by "taxation", i.e., by raiding

for cattle, selecting for this purpose the tribes who did not welcome his invasion. "The taxgatherers are out, and there is an immense amount of excitement among the natives on the other side. . . . The results of the expedition are not great—200 cows and 1,500 sheep. The natives did not know of the expedition and were taken by surprise" (p. 119). "Another tribe close here to the south shows hostility—they are to be taxed to-night. . . . The party have come back with no cows, but with a heap of things used by the natives. . . . How I hate this country and all the work" (pp. 123, 124, 125). Mere looting expeditions were these, bare, indefensible robbery. "Yesterday we moved on the Moogie tribe, but it was a failure as regards the capture of cows. . . . Made another attack on the Moogie, and took 1,500 cows" (p. 147). Such extracts might be multiplied indefinitely.

Cow-lifting, however, was not the only means by which Gordon raised his revenue; he made large captures of ivory, seizing all that he found in the hands of traders, for he had "decreed the monopoly of ivory and commerce" for the State, and he confiscated all the ivory he found. To use his own description of his position: "I am quite independent, raise my own revenue and administer it, and send the residue to Cairo" (p. 118).

The traders who brought down slaves generally brought with them cows and ivory; these Gordon seized, and generally stripped the dealers, flogged them, and turned them loose. Thus we read: "Everyone took from them what they liked, till they were despoiled. They were then beaten and dismissed" (pp. 341, 342). "I gave the captured slave-dealer a good flogging, and let him go" (p. 365). "We have captured a great deal of ivory" (p. 358), he writes in narrating his stoppage of several slave-raiders' caravans. "I heard from my German that there were slaves on board, so I sent him to see, and he found stowed away in the wood some 105 of them; so I confiscated them and the ivory. . . . The ivory confiscated is worth £2,000" (pp. 36, 37). "In a year he [the Khedive] has had £48,000 from the province, and I have spent say £20,000 at the outside, and have £60,000 worth of ivory here" (p. 117). On the whole the Khedive profited largely by his determination to show that "life and liberty are sacred things". "I shall confiscate the 2,000 cows, for I cannot give them back to the far-away

tribes from whom they were stolen" (p. 19). "Nassar has at least 300 slaves with him and 2,000 cows . . . so I shall wait here for the cows, and then start up for the slaves up the Saubat River. If I miss them I shall hear if they have passed; if they have I shall confiscate all the property of the slavers here and elsewhere in the province" (pp. 23, 24). As might be guessed by anyone who knew anything of Egyptian rule, the objections of the Khedive to the slave-trade were purely business-like, and Gordon carried out his instructions faithfully, and endorsed slavery wherever it did not injure his employer's interests.

Gordon's attitude towards slavery has been so grossly misrepresented in this country, that it is necessary to define clearly his course of action, and to prove by his own words how far he was out of sympathy with those who urge our Government to persevere in their invasion of the Soudan with the view of putting down slavery. It will be convenient to take separately his actions during his first stay in Central Africa, as Governor of the Equatorial Provinces from 1873—1876, and his policy from 1877—1879, as active Governor-General of the Soudan. (He retained the office for some time after he left Africa.)

1873—1876.—So far from disapproving the buying and selling of slaves, Colonel Gordon himself shared in such practices. "One of the men brought me over his two children, twelve and nine years old, because he could not keep them, and sold them to me for a small basketful of dhoora. I gave one of them to —, and the other to a German" (p. 17). "I have bought another lad to-day, sold by his brother for a small basket of dhoora" (p. 20). Perhaps his views are best put in the following passage: "I think that the slavers' wars, made for the purpose of taking slaves, are detestable; but if a father or mother, of their own free will, and with the will of the child, sells that child, I do not see the objection to it. It was and is the wholesale depopulation of districts which makes slavery such a curse, and the numbers killed, or who perish, in the collection of slaves" (pp. 24, 25). As to family affection and the sufferings caused by separation in buying and selling slaves, Colonel Gordon treated these with contempt. "The father", he writes, alluding to his above-named purchase of two children, "did not even take leave of them; and though he has been over since, has never noticed them or spoken to them" (p. 17). A man with

two children had stolen a cow ; " I happened to go round, and passing the hut saw only one child. ' Where was the other ? ' I asked of the mother. ' Oh, it had been given to the man from whom the cow had been stolen. ' This was said with a cheerful smile by the mother. ' But ', I said, ' are you not sorry ? ' ' Oh no ! we would rather have the cow. ' ' But ', said I, ' you have eaten the cow, and the pleasure is over. ' ' Oh, but all the same, we would sooner have had the cow ! '. This is perfectly true. The other child of twelve years old, like her parents, did not care a bit. A lamb taken from a flock would bleat, while here you see not the very slightest vestige of feeling. Is it not very odd ? If the mother had expressed the slightest wish, I would have rescued the child again ; but it was evidently a matter of rejoicing, and she did not care as much as if she had lost a handful of dhoora " (pp. 19, 20). " In spite of what Livingstone says, I do not myself, about here, find that any affection exists between the parents and the children ; there is a mutual pleasure in parting with one another " (p. 24).

When Colonel Gordon came under the influence of English feeling he wrote in very different fashion. In a letter to the *Times*, March 23, 1881, he writes : " I appeal to my countrymen who have wives and families, and who can realise to some degree the bitterness of parting with them—to God—what it must be for those poor black peoples to have their happy households rent asunder for an effete, alien, set, like the pashas of Egypt and Turkey " (p. 346, note). Happy households rent asunder ? There is a mutual pleasure in parting with one another ! I do not think that Gordon was consciously dishonest in his letter to the *Times* ; he was a variable, impressionable creature, reflecting the circumstances around him. In 1874 he saw the blacks would sell their children for a trifle, and he reflected them ; in 1881 he was surrounded by people who objected to slavery and imported their own ideas into the blacks' heads, and he reflected them.

1877-1879.—As Governor-General of the Soudan, Gordon tried hard to put down slave-raiding, but bought slaves for his army, and when he captured a slave-gang he distributed the slaves as he best could. " A party of seven slave-dealers with twenty-three slaves were captured and brought to me. . . . The men and boys were put in the ranks ; the women were told off to be wives (!) of the

soldiers" (p. 345). (The note of exclamation is Gordon's, not mine.) "Just as I wrote this I heard a very great tumult going on among the Arabs, and I feared a fight. However, it turned out to be caused by the division of the slaves among the tribes; and now the country is covered by strings of slaves, going off in all directions with their new owners. . . . It appears that the slaves were not divided, but were scrambled for. It is a horrid idea, for of course families get separated, but I cannot help it, and the slaves seem to be perfectly indifferent to anything whatsoever" (p. 359). "I gave the captured slave-dealer a good flogging and let him go, and gave the six slaves to a tribe near the spot" (p. 365). He defended his action by necessity: "The 25,000 black troops I have here are either captured slaves or bought slaves. How are we to recruit if the slave-trade ceases?" (p. 351). "Of course I must let time soften down the ill effects of what is written against me in the papers, on account of my purchasing the slaves now in possession of individuals in order to obtain the troops necessary to put down slavery. I need troops—how am I to get them but thus? . . . I want you to understand this, for I doubt not people will write and say—1. Colonel Gordon buys slaves for the Government. 2. Colonel Gordon lets the Gallabats take slaves. To No. 1 I say: 'True, for I need the purchased slaves to put down the slave-dealers, and to break up their semi-independent bands.' To No. 2 I say: 'True, for I dare not stop it to any extent, for fear of adding to my enemies, before I have broken up the nest of slave-dealers at Shaka'" (pp. 254, 255). "One thing troubles me. What am I to do with the three or four thousand slaves, women and children, that are now at Shaka, if we take it? I cannot take them back to their own country; I cannot feed them. Solve this problem for me. I must let them be taken by my auxiliaries, or by my soldiers, or by the merchants" (p. 256). He protests hotly against the injustice of blaming him because he allows slavery: "Would you shoot them all? [slave-dealers] Have they no rights? Are they not to be considered? Had the planters no rights? Did not our Government once allow slave trading? Do you know that cargoes of slaves came into Bristol Harbour in the time of our fathers? I would have given £500 to have had you and the Anti-slavery Society in Dara during the three days of doubt whether the slave-dealers would fight or not . . . I do not believe

in you all. You say this and that, and you do not do it; you give your money and you have done your duty; you praise one another, etc. . . . Now understand me. If it suits me I will buy slaves. I will let captured slaves go down to Egypt and not molest them, and I will do what I like, and what God in his mercy may direct me to do about domestic slaves; but I will break the neck of slave-raids even if it cost me my life. I will buy slaves for my army; for this purpose I will make soldiers against their will to enable me to prevent raids. I will do this in the light of day and defy your resolutions and your actions" (pp. 279, 280).

Egypt had entered into a treaty to liberate her slaves in 1884 and those in her dependencies in 1889, but Colonel Gordon did not look on the matter as hopeful. "When you have got the ink which has soaked into blotting-paper out of it, then slavery will cease in these lands" (p. 285). "The people are bent on slave-traffic . . . I declare I see no human way to stop it" (p. 289). "If the liberation of slaves takes place in 1884, and the present system of government goes on, there cannot fail to be a revolt of the whole country. . . . Seven-eighths of the population of the Soudan are slaves, and the loss of revenue in 1889 will be more than two-thirds, if it is ever carried out" (p. 351).

Gordon was not in favor of European meddling in Egyptian affairs, either on behalf of the slaves or of anything else. "Europe wants to wash them—they do not want to be washed. . . . Let us keep clear of interfering with their internal affairs; let us leave reforms to them and their peoples" (pp. 352, 353). "I put aside, in the first place, the fact that God has made the people of Egypt what they are; that it is by His will the Khedive is their ruler; and go on to say, that, after European ideas, the Egyptian people are a servile race, as foretold they should be; and that, not only do they not deserve a better government than they have, but they would not be content under a better government" (p. 435). "To remedy the state of these Oriental countries . . . there are two ways: either for European nations to annex *in toto*, or exterminate their populations—there is no middle route; the first is a bad speculation; the second is impossible; and the best way is to let them alone, and not be philanthropic to those who do not need it" (p. 436).

Any judgment of Gordon's character which left out of

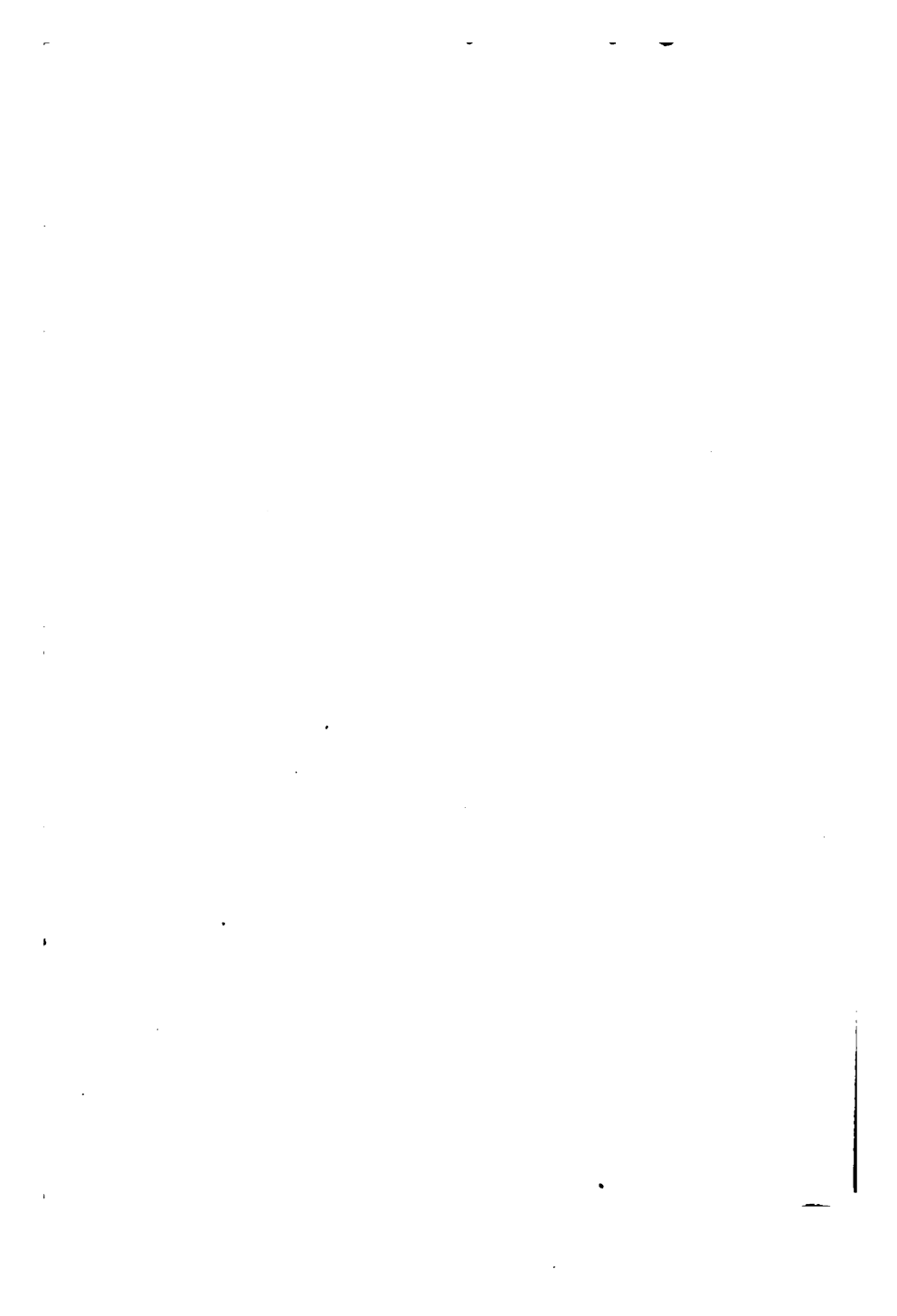
sight his religion would be a very imperfect one. He had a curious strain of mysticism in him, and was by no means an orthodox Christian: "Have you read *Modern Christianity a civilised Heathenism*? I had those views long before I read the book" (p. 282). Christian missionaries were not to his mind. "How refreshing it is to hear of the missionary efforts made in these countries! — wrote me word, 'Three mission parties leave shortly for the East Coast. One under Mr. — takes a steam launch for Lake Nyassa, and "down", — says, "he will run the first slave nuggar he meets on the lake"'. Of course it not signifying a jot who is on board. This reminds one so forcibly of the mission labors of St. Paul, and of the spirit of St. John. — wrote and asked me if a missionary could get along with Mtesa [a chief]. You see that a missionary likes to deal with Cæsars, and not with the herd of common mortals" (p. 81). From living so long among Mussulmans he had imbibed much of their fatalism, and with it the indifferent courage which fears no peril, convinced that the hour of death is pre-ordained, and can neither be hurried nor retarded. "I do nothing of this—I am a chisel which cuts the wood; the carpenter directs it" (p. 175). "You are a machine, though allowed to feel as if you had the power of action" (p. 152). "The events of the future are all written, and are mapped out in all their detail for each one of us. The Negro, the Arab, and the Bedouin's course—their meeting with me, etc., is decreed" (p. 213). "Everything that happens to-day, good or evil, is settled and fixed, and it is no use fretting over it" (p. 26). "No comfort is equal to that which he has who has God for his stay; who believes, not in words but in fact, that *all* things are ordained to happen and must happen" (p. 42). His German servant lost his rifle: "I said, 'You are a born idiot of three years old! How dare you touch my rifle?' However, as it was ordained to be lost, I soon got over it" (p. 48). "I feel compelled to say either 'I hope', or 'I trust'—is it the presage of evil or what, or is it my liver? It is, however, all written, and is only unrolling" (p. 117). The courage which has been so much talked of was the result of this fatalism, and Gordon shared it with his Mussulman comrades.

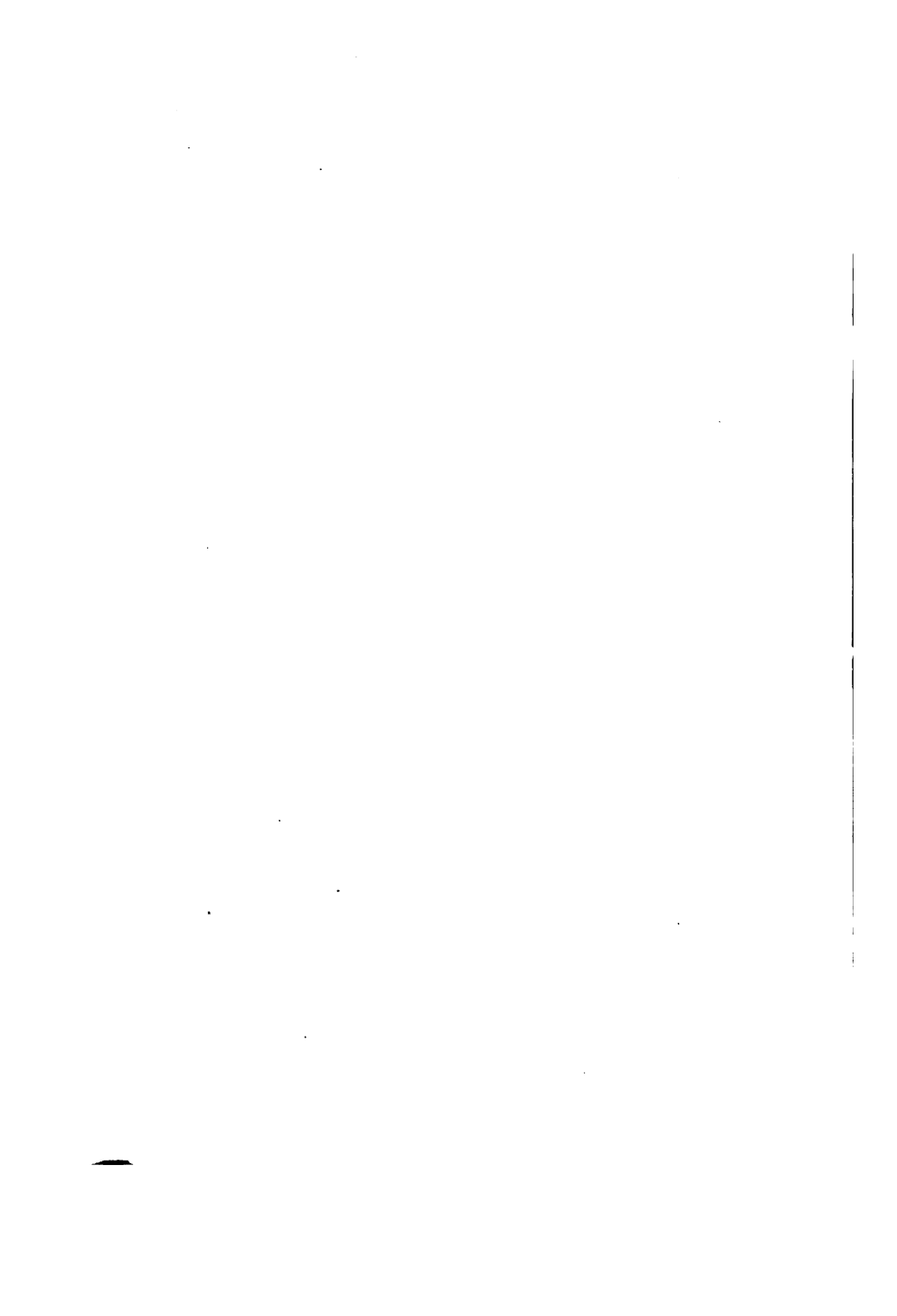
He carried out his belief in God's directing influence to the fullest extent, and when in doubt was wont to decide his own actions by tossing, evidently not agreeing with

Thomas Gataker, who in 1619 in his book on "The Nature and Use of Lots", said that to expect God's interference "by an immediate and extraordinarie worke is no more lawfull here than elsewhere, yea, is indeed mere superstition". "I am quite well, and think things promise, with God's help, to work out all right. Tossing up about difficult questions relieves me of much anxiety. Two servants who were useless were brought in, and the question whether they went on or not decided by a toss in their presence. It went for them once; however, afterwards they were sent away—they exasperated me dreadfully" (p. 6). The last *naïve* confession is delightful. God decided that the servants should go, so Gordon took them, but—a touch of shrewdness tempering the superstition—he sent them away again when his view of their usefulness did not coincide with the divine. Be sure he did not toss when his mind was made up.

The superstition which was ingrained in his character came out strongly from time to time. Some African magicians practised some incantations against him, and soon afterwards his men were defeated: "Did I not mention the incantations made against us by the magicians on the other side, and how somehow, from the earnestness that they made them with, I had some thought of misgiving on account of them? It was odd this repulse was so soon to follow. These prayers were earnest prayers for celestial aid in which the Prayer knew he would need help from some unknown power to avert a danger. That the native knows not the true God is true, but God knows him, and moved him to pray and answered his prayer". (p. 117).

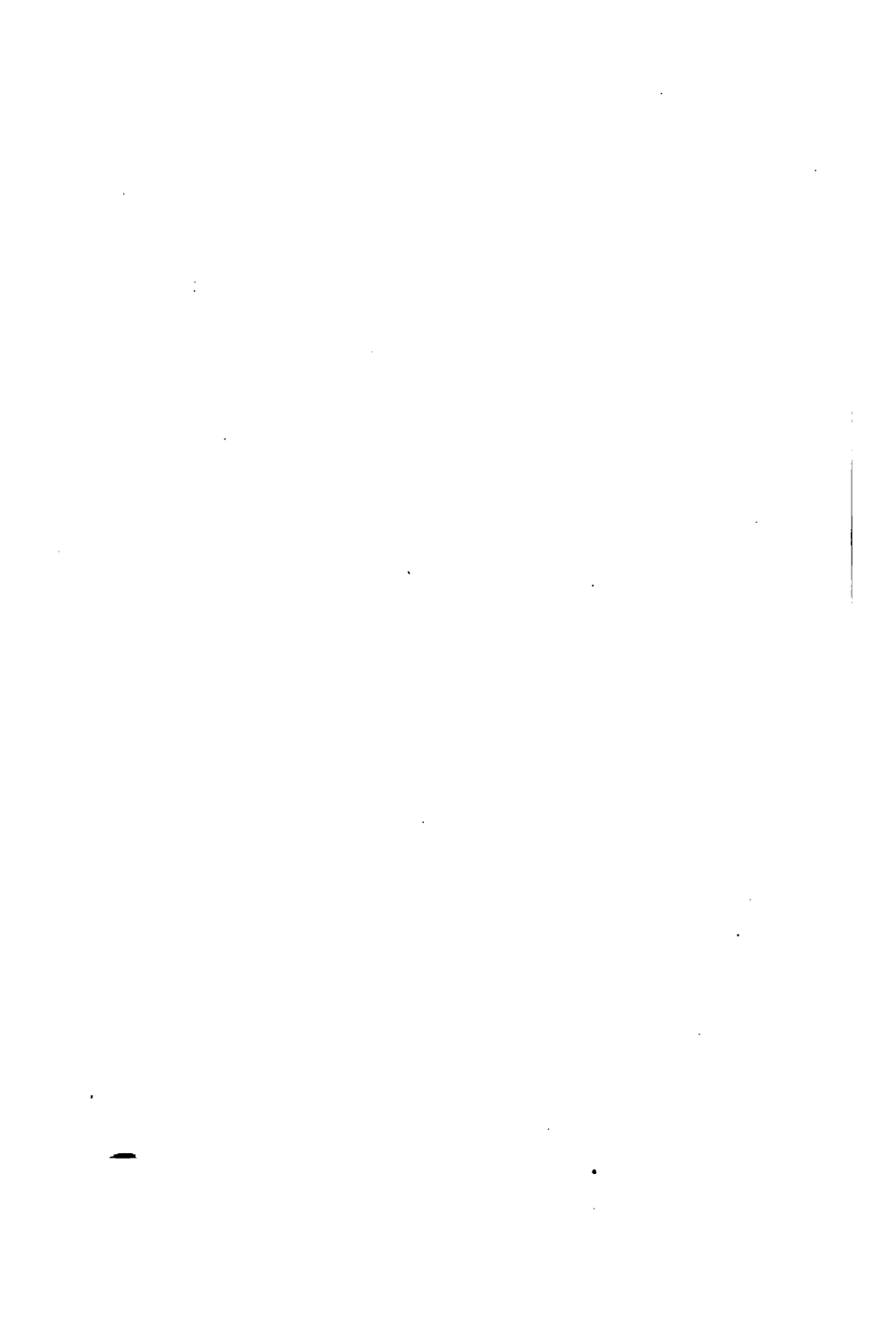
Such is Gordon's character as limned by himself. As the glamor-mist which enwraps him dissolves away, his figure, now magnified to the heroic, will be seen in its true human proportions. He will be recognised as soldier of fortune, honest and loyal to his employers, instead of as the ideal warrior-saint of modern Christianity. His death will no longer be styled a martyrdom, but the natural outcome of his fanatical imprudence and self-will; and England will then rejoice that the rebuking voices of her workers checked the statesmen and the pressmen who were using his name as the fiery cross to gather an army of revenge.

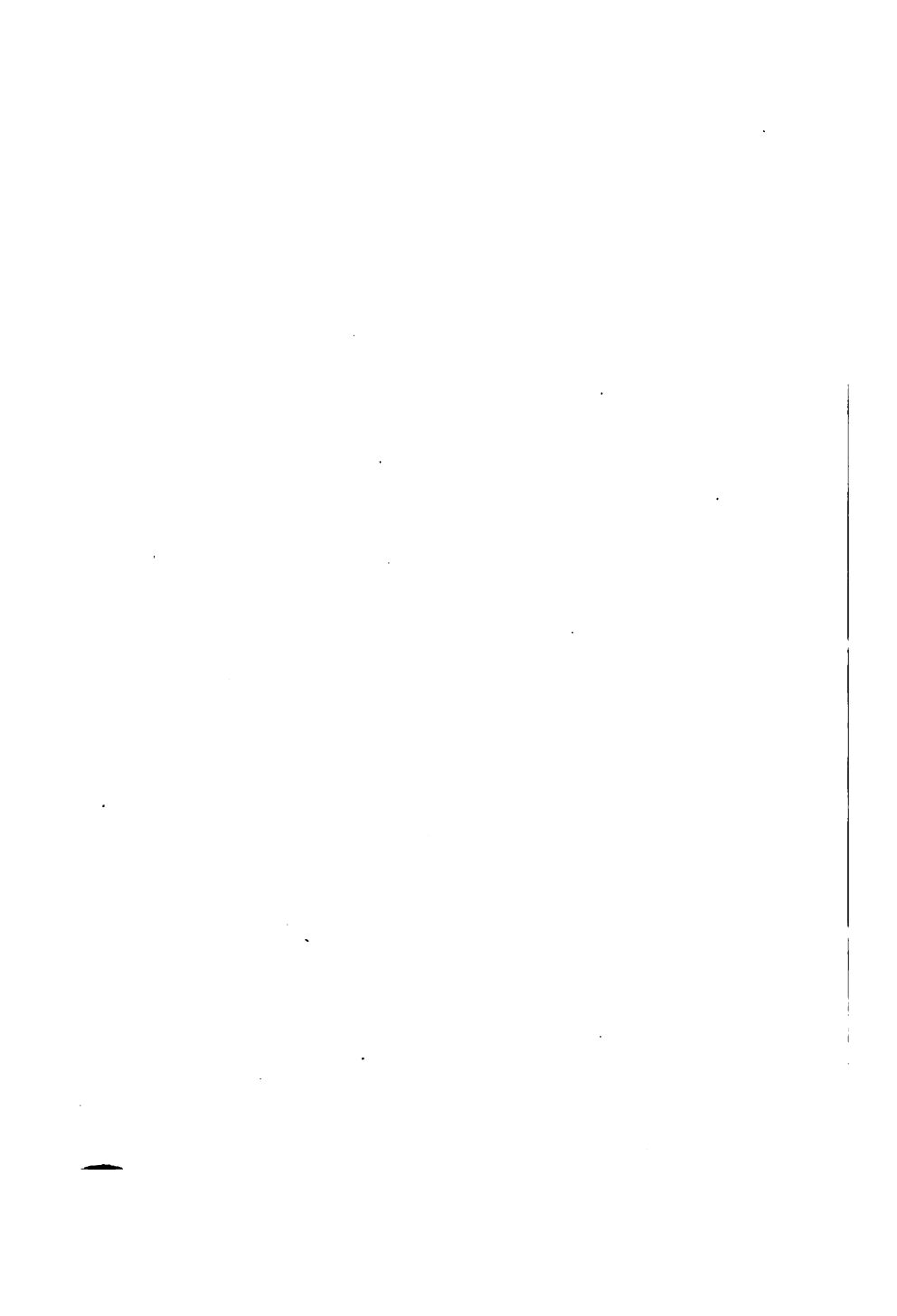




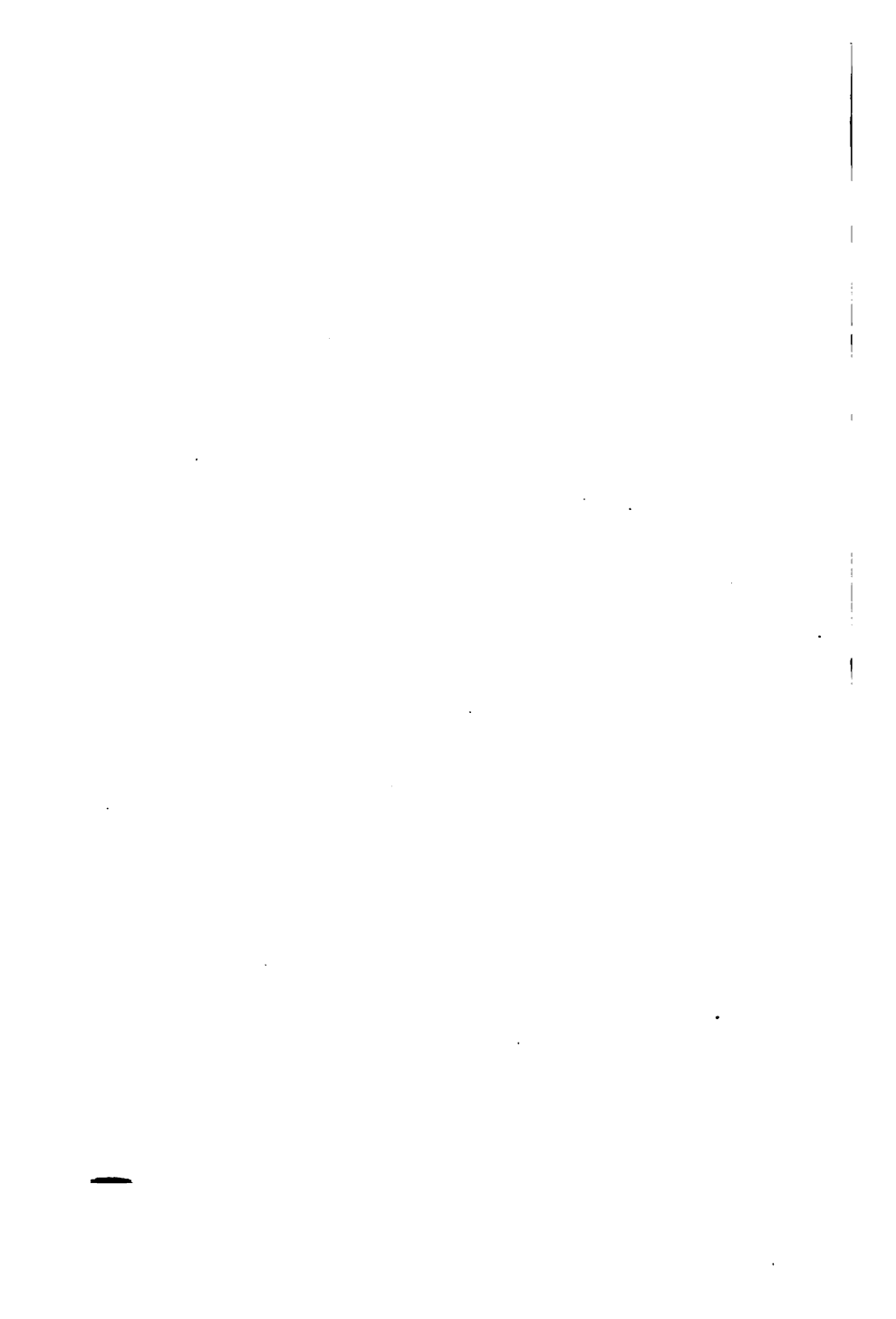


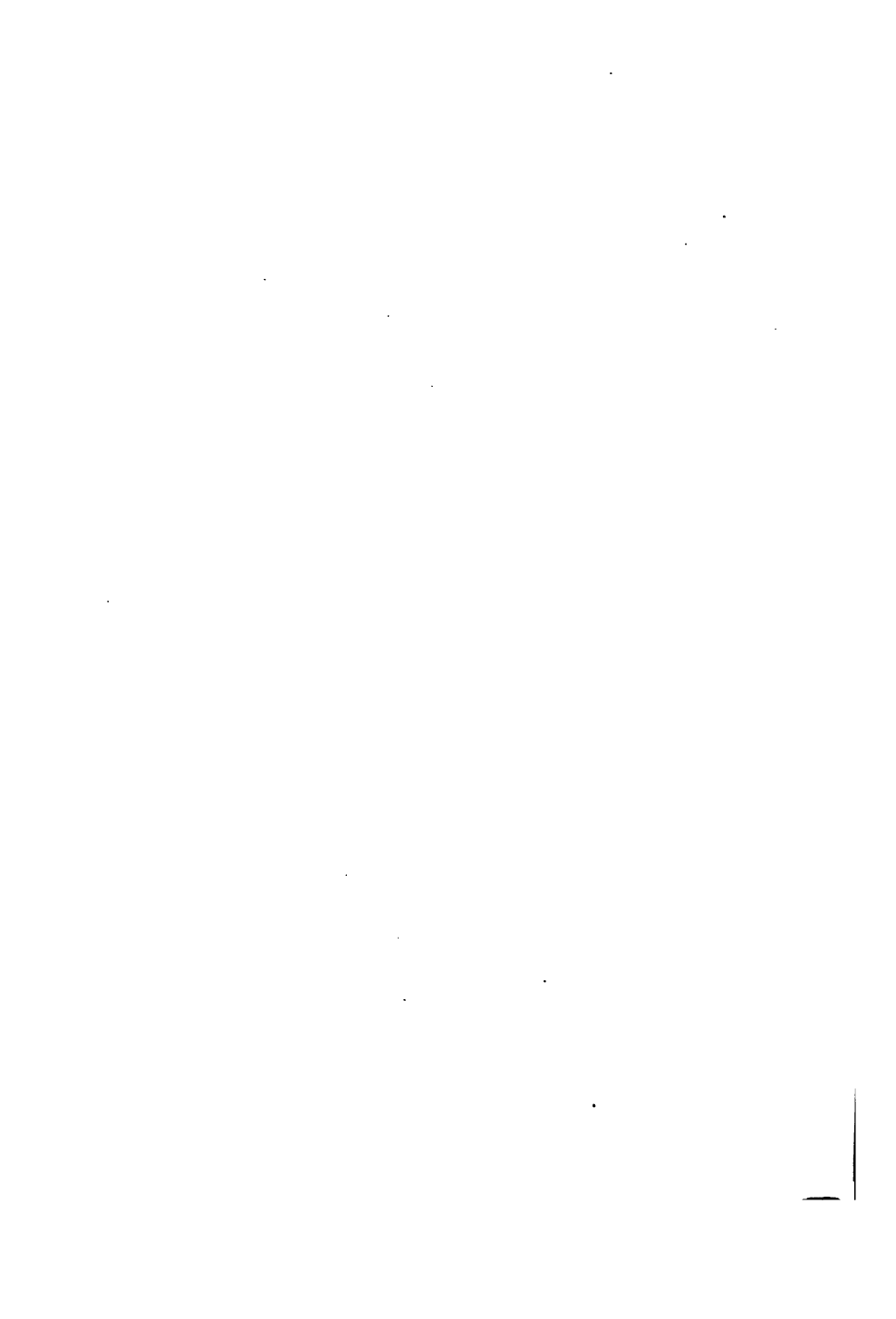






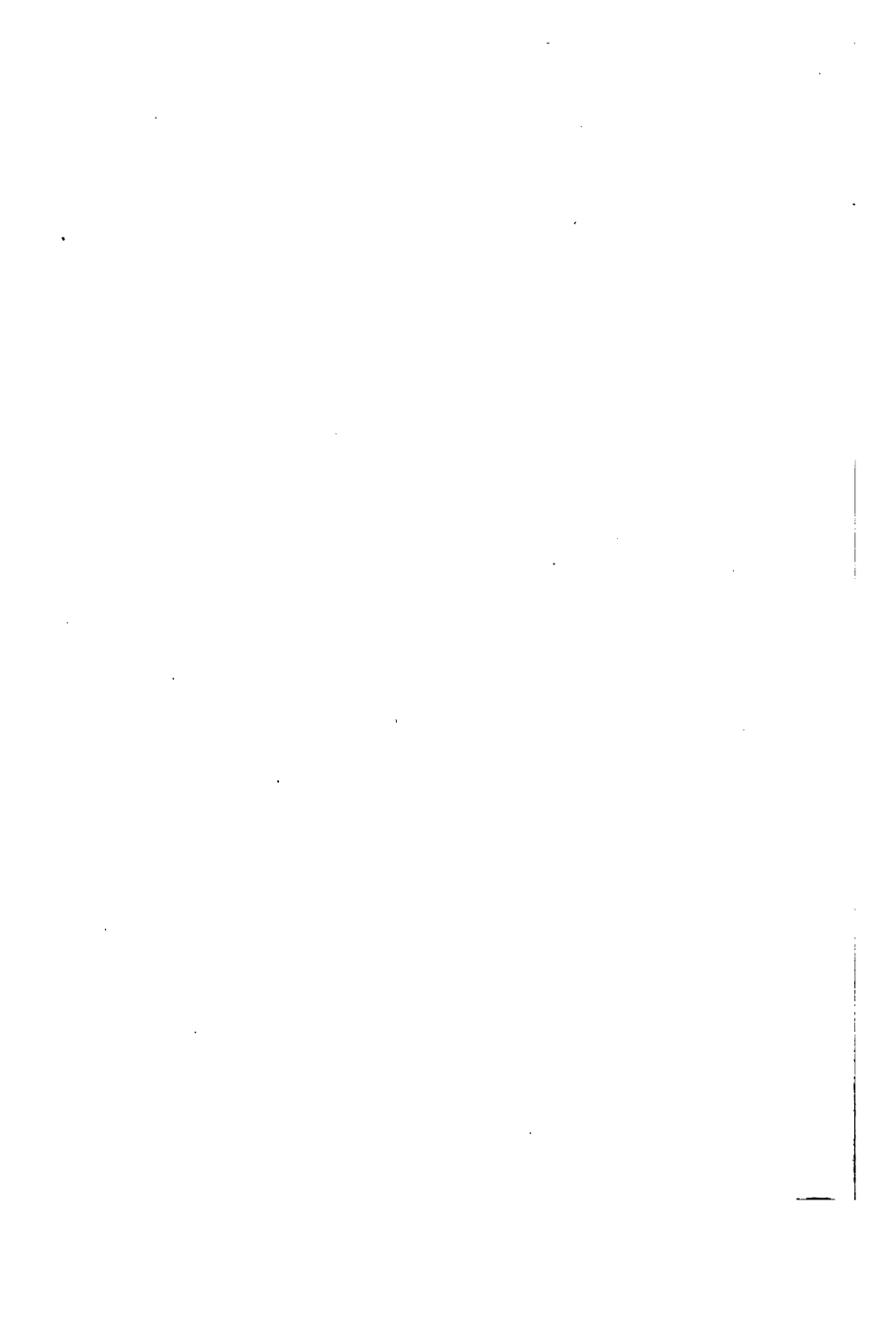




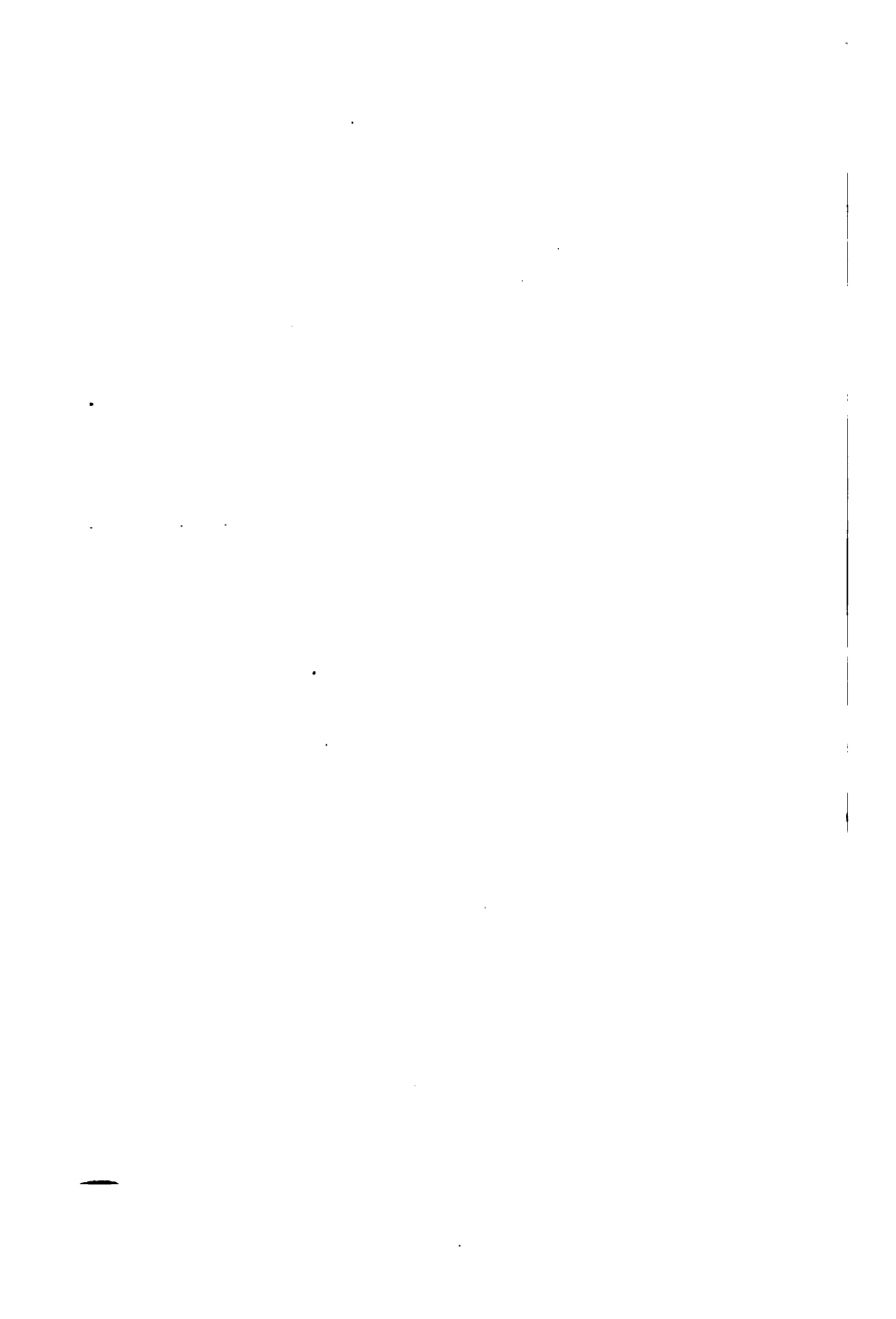








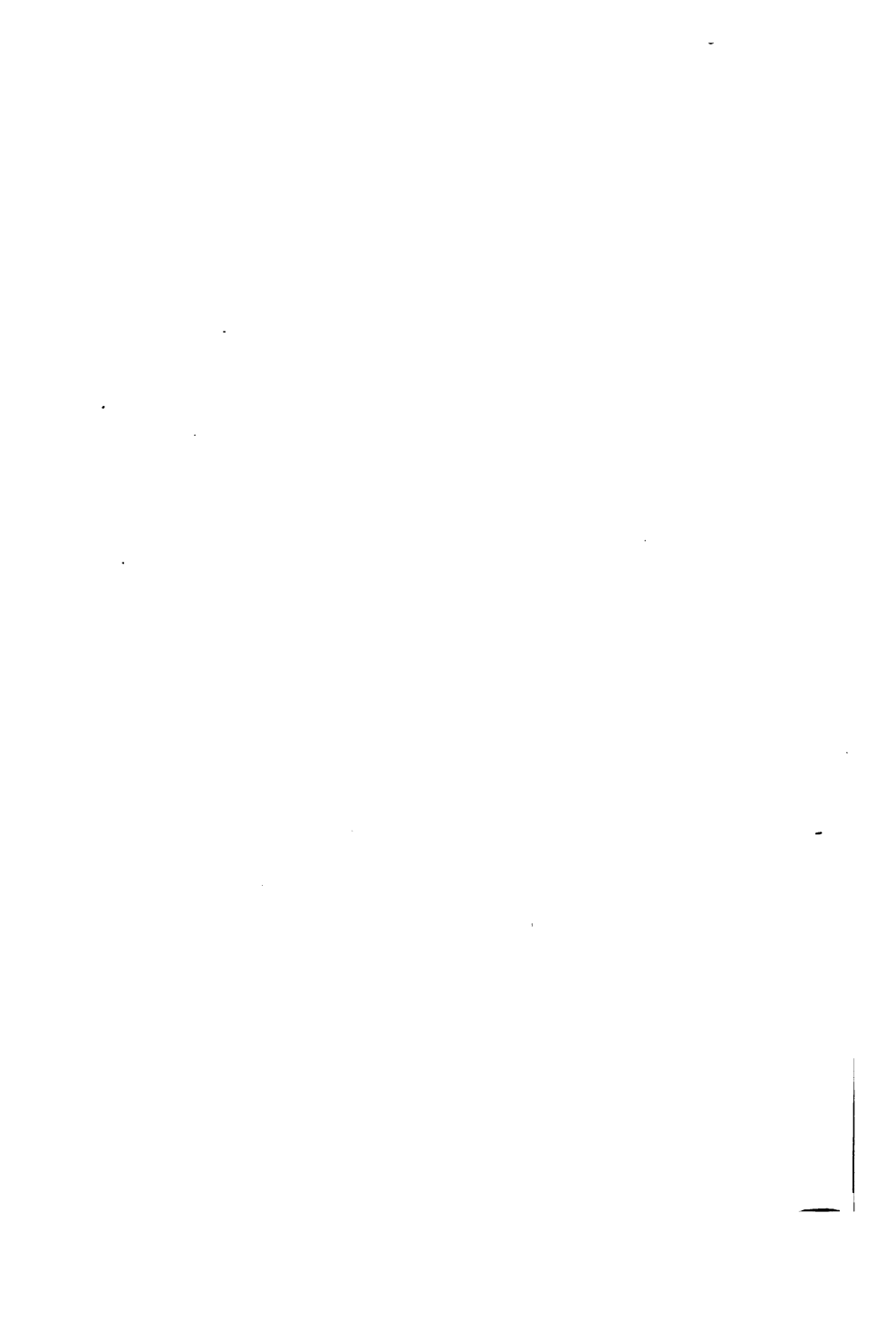


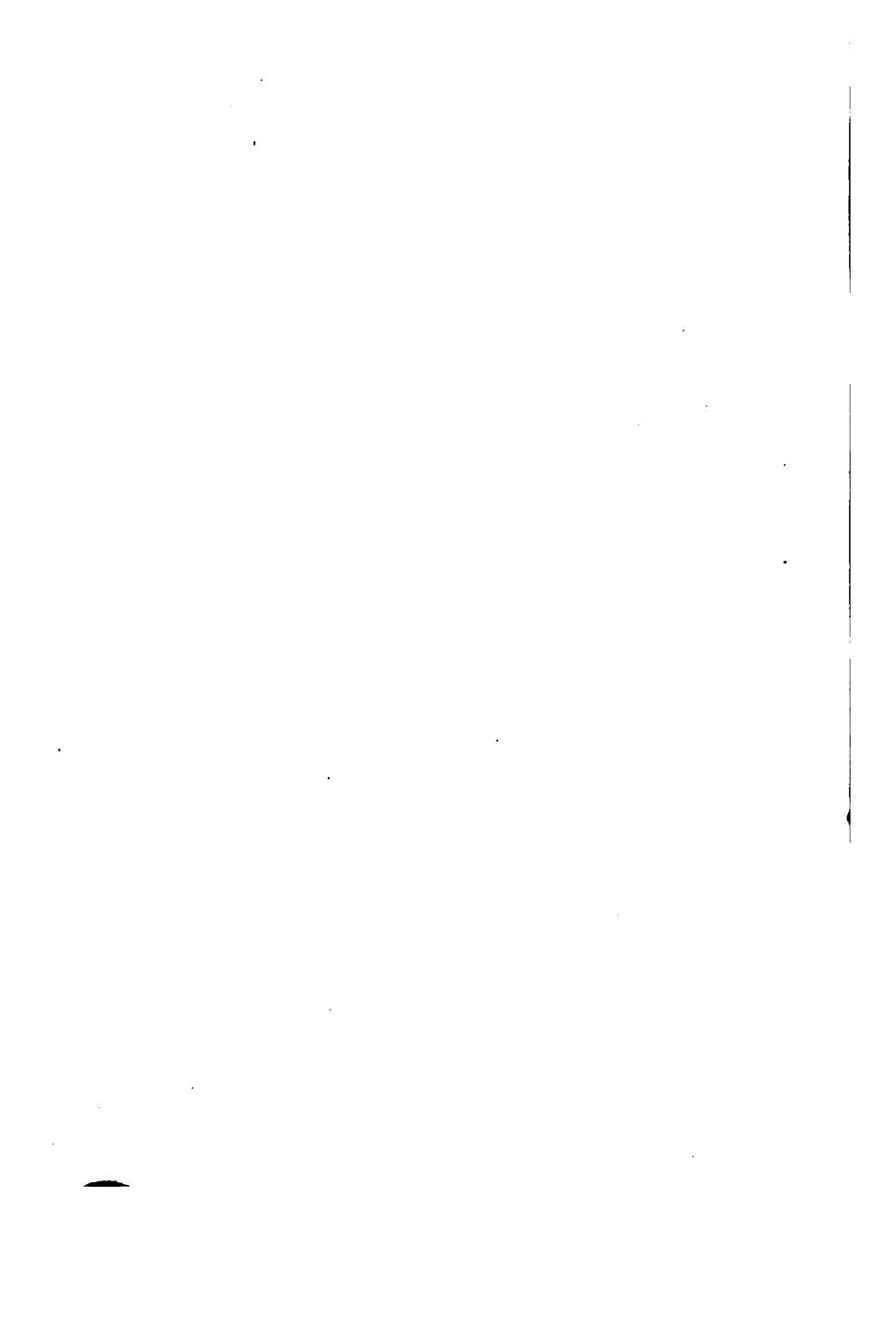


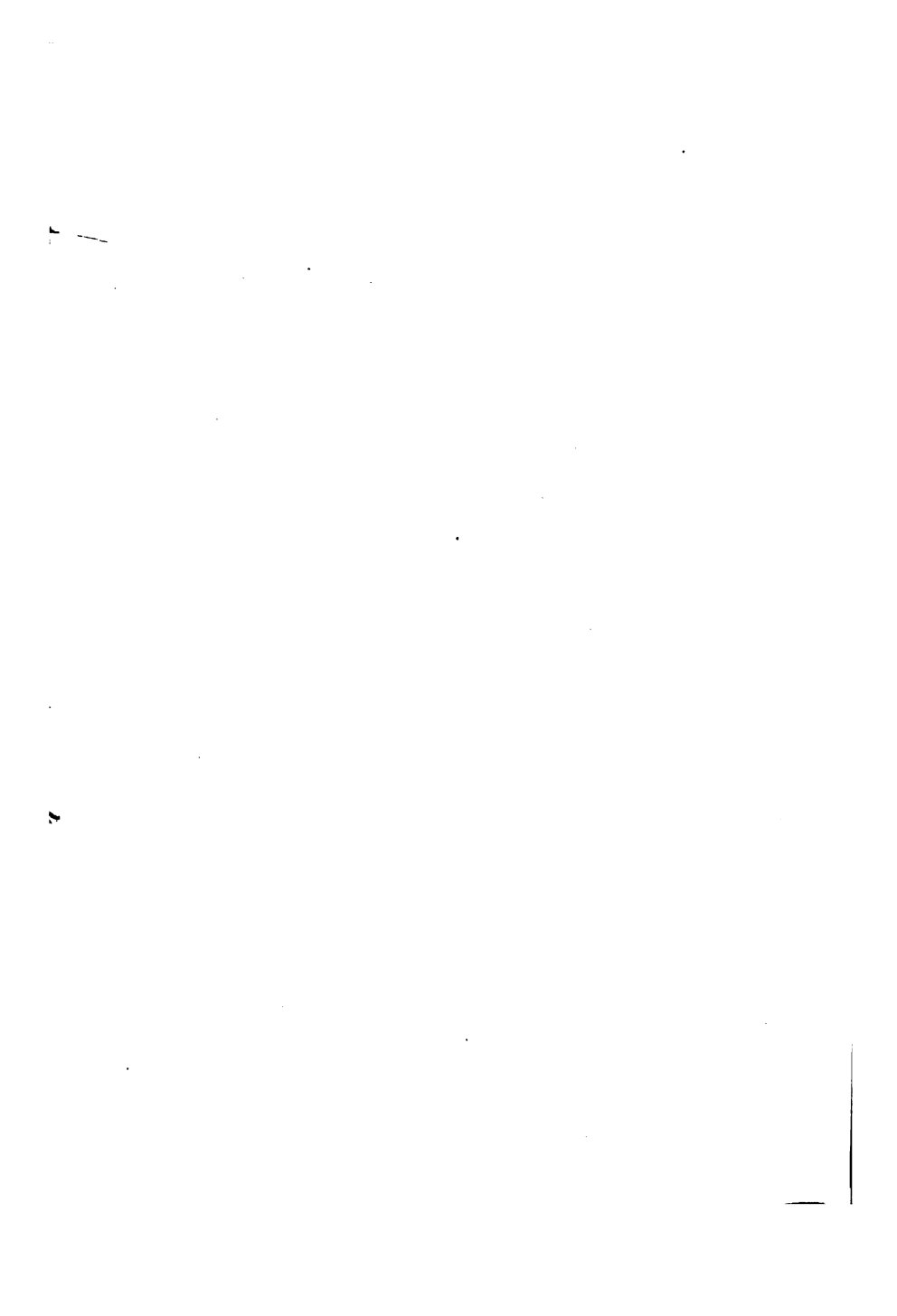












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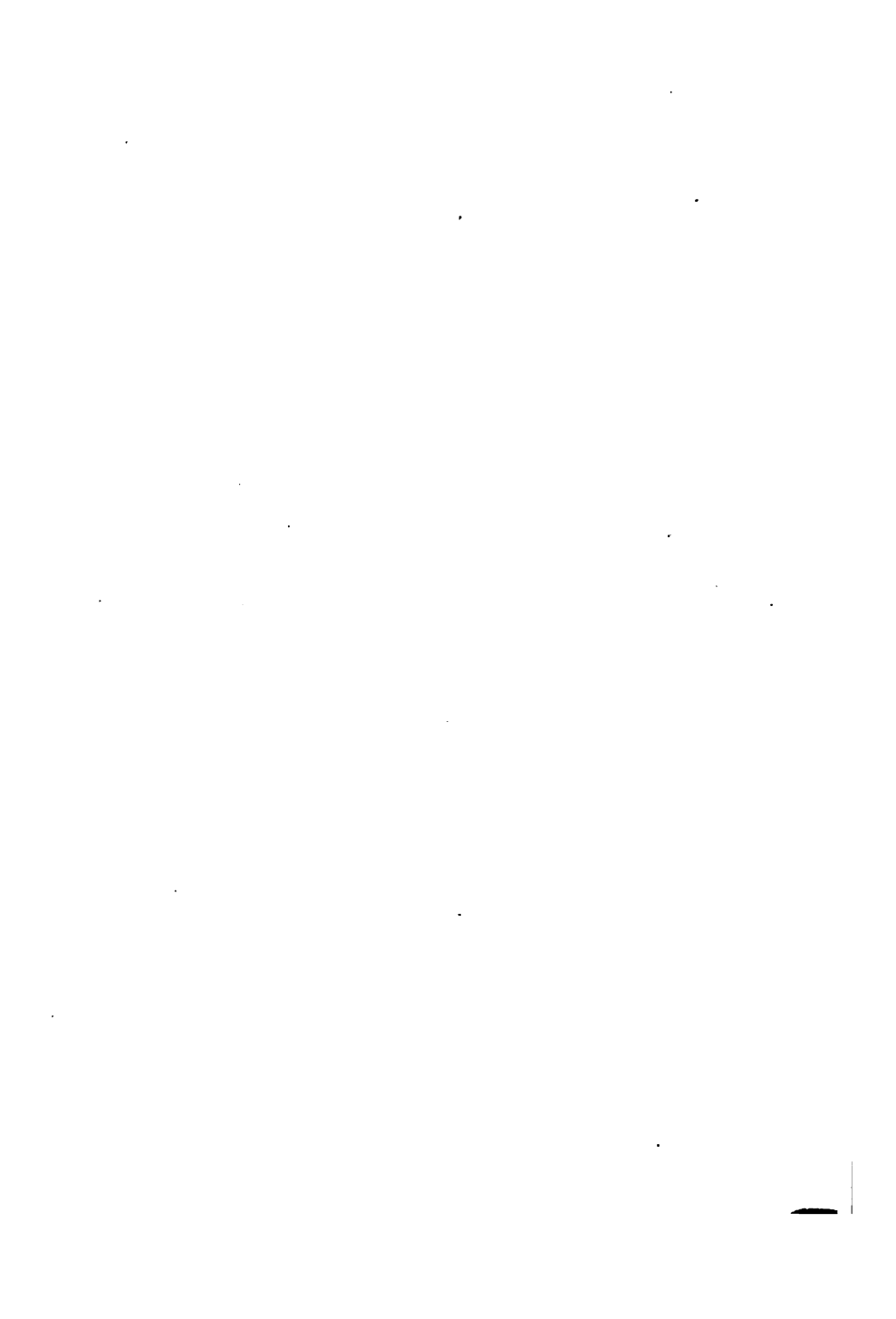
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